

HeadOn: Substance Abuse Prevention for Grades 6-8™

Brief Program Description

HeadOn: Substance Abuse Prevention for Grades 6-8™ combines innovative computer technologies and proven prevention science. The self-guided, interactive program delivers substance abuse prevention science to middle school-aged adolescents using computer-based educational technologies that effectively promote learning of key skills and information. The program primarily targets the use of cigarettes, alcohol, and marijuana, but also includes lessons on opiates, inhalants and stimulants.

Program Strategies

The HeadOn program is designed to promote well-known protective factors based on both the social-influence model of drug use and a generalized skills-training model. Program modules are integrated via a cab driver/narrator who takes the program user to various neighborhoods where they can access program modules. These modules address various classes of drugs and their immediate and long term effects, as well as the risks of drug experimentation, consequences of drug use, drug refusal skills, risk of misusing prescription drugs, resistance to advertisements for drugs, peer drug use misconceptions, social skills training, and self-management skills training. Module content is presented via various interactive technologies, including fluency-based, computer-assisted instruction technology, which promotes mastery and long-term retention of the material learned. The program also includes a game, Skills Challenge, which allows students to practice the skills learned throughout the lesson modules.

Population Focus

HeadOn is intended for adolescents in grades 6 through 8.

Suitable Settings

The program is suitable for implementation in classroom settings and in school computer labs and may be incorporated into the teacher's schedule as part of health and/or computer class. The program can also be used in after-school programs. HeadOn is also suitable for use at home on personal computers.

Required Resources

Required resources include the HeadOn: Substance Abuse Prevention for Grades 6-8™ computer software.

Implementation Timeline

HeadOn is intended to be delivered over the course of 15 sessions during the academic year. Sessions are approximately 30 to 45 minutes in length.

Outcomes

Results of the initial study included the following:

- Participants in the HeadOn group demonstrated significantly higher levels of accuracy in objective knowledge about drug abuse prevention relative to the participants in the LifeSkills Training program.
- Participants in the HeadOn and LifeSkills groups achieved comparable, positive outcomes in self-reported rates of substance use, intentions to use substances, attitudes toward substances, beliefs about the prevalence of substance use among both their peers and adults, as well as the likelihood of refusing a drug offer.

Contact Information

For indepth information on this program, please use the contact listed below.

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